

Sister Peggy Rooney

“My life growing up was bounded by education, faith, and music.” After attending Cathedral High School, Sister Peggy entered the Sisters of St. Joseph and comments, “We loved the sisters. I always wanted to be a nun because they stood out.”

After graduating from Regis College, she earned a Master of Education at Salem State University and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies at Boston University. Sister Peggy taught in schools from the North Shore to the South Shore, and throughout the City of Boston.

“As a teacher, you think you are going to be the boss in the classroom, be in charge, but the children were my teachers, opening my eyes and my heart. Some of them had lost a parent, a sibling; they could be fragile at different times. Sometimes, they came to school hungry. I tried to give them all I could, compassionately and lovingly, but truly, I received much more than I gave.”

For many years, Sister taught aphasic students at the Boston School, Randolph. Feeling her heart open to helping the vulnerable, Sister Peggy also helped people living with the HIV/AIDS virus at St. John of God Hospital, Brighton. She also assisted women who were survivors of human trafficking, as well as ministered to those in prison at Nashua Street Jail.

Summers, Sister worked in Appalachia, Kentucky, invited children to the church center for food, organized arts and crafts activities, and helped cook for the many volunteers. It was hot and humid, but everyone felt happy to alleviate some little bit of the suffering they saw around them.

Sister Peggy participated in a study sabbatical at the University of California, Berkeley. There she was exposed to different lifestyles, which opened her heart even more. Her journey continued at Pine Street Inn, Boston, helping women who had been struggling with substance abuse find a new start in life.

Asked to teach English to new immigrants, her ministry took her to Casserly House, Roslindale, teaching adults and coordinating the after school homework program. Sister Peggy then worked at Dudley Street Library, Roxbury teaching ESL classes, followed by several years teaching adults ESL at the Grover Cleveland and Jeremiah E. Burke schools, Dorchester.

“Each time I went to work somewhere different, I felt more whole, more aware of who God is! My work made me think about how diversity, compassion, caring, and love all tied into the whole!”

The adventure continues!



Reigniting her musical background, Sister Peggy now plays piano and holds sing-a-longs with the residents at the German Centre for Extended Care, West Roxbury. On Thursdays, Sister Peggy plays for the sisters at Bethany Health Care Center, Framingham. She treasures her time with the residents and their families and is grateful they can sing together.

“This is my passion, knowing that by keeping a song in one's heart, you can change someone's life. It is a joy beyond words. My life continues to be a great run. I have always loved adventure and the promise it holds. So God, whatever comes next, I am open!”